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CAPTAIN AMERICA
AND
THE FALCON
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BEGINNING! A STARTLING NEW CONCEPT... A STUNNING NEW ADVENTURE!
RIVER OF DEATH!

1941! The world at *war!* And in a secret laboratory, frail *Steve Rogers* became the American *super-soldier!* For four thrilling years, he fought the Axis powers—until a freak stroke of fate threw him into *suspended animation.* He woke in the mid-1960s, a man *twenty years out of his time.* Since that fateful day, Steve Rogers has sought his *destiny* in this brave new world.

Stan Lee PRESENTS: CAPTAIN AMERICA AND THE FALCON™

EDITED, WRITTEN & DRAWN BY JACK KIRBY INKED BY FRANK GIACOIA COLORED BY G. ROUSSOS LETTERED BY JIM NOVAK ADMIRED BY ARCHIE GOODWIN

WHAT BEGAN AS A NIGHTMARISH ABDUCTION TO A PRISON FORTRESS IN THE UNCHARTED WILDS OF CENTRAL AMERICA, SUDDENLY CHANGES FROM A SINISTER INCIDENT INTO A FAR-OUT SAGA OF OVERWHELMING TERROR!!! IT BEGINS HERE--ON A SHORE OF THE RIO DE MUERTE--

THE RIVER OF DEATH!

I'LL FOLLOW THE COURSE OF THIS JUNGLE RIVER. THERE MUST BE A TOWN SOMEWHERE ALONG ITS BANKS!

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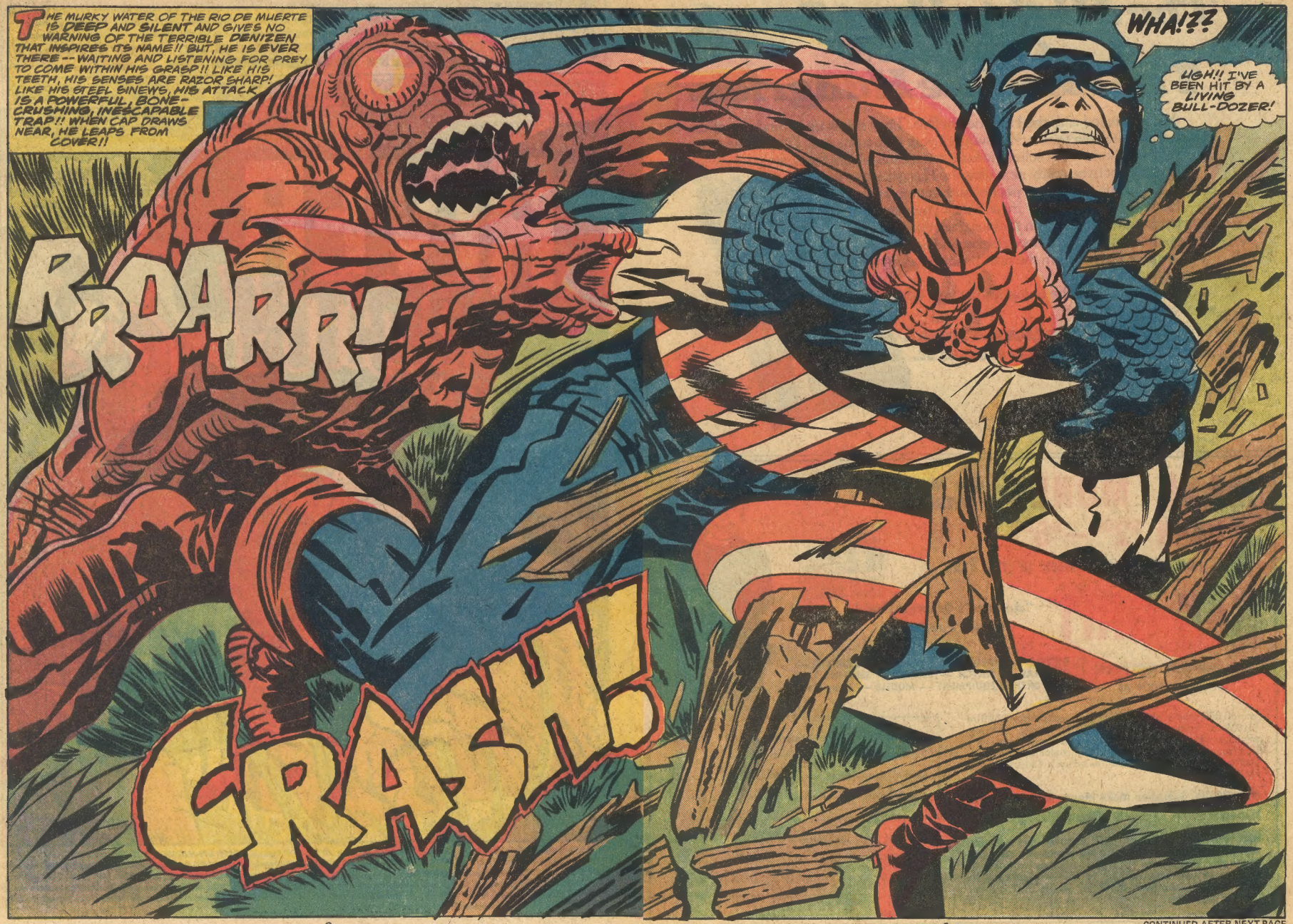
THE MURKY WATER OF THE RIO DE MUERTE IS DEEP AND SILENT AND GIVES NO WARNING OF THE TERRIBLE DENIZEN THAT INSPIRES ITS NAME!! BUT, HE IS EVER THERE -- WAITING AND LISTENING FOR PREY TO COME WITHIN HIS GRASP!! LIKE HIS TEETH, HIS SENSES ARE RAZOR SHARP! LIKE HIS STEEL SINEWS, HIS ATTACK IS A POWERFUL, BONE-CRUSHING, INESCAPABLE TRAP!! WHEN CAP DRAWS NEAR, HE LEAPS FROM COVER!!
RROARRR!
CRASH!
WHA!??
UGH!! I'VE BEEN HIT BY A LIVING BULL-DOZER!

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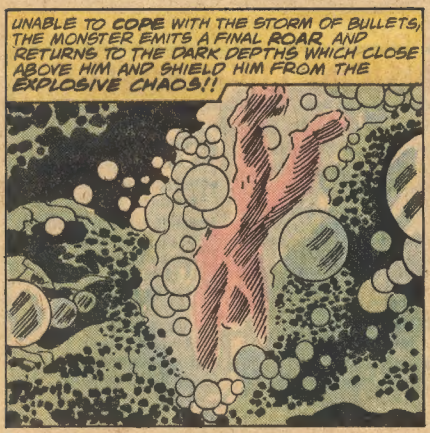
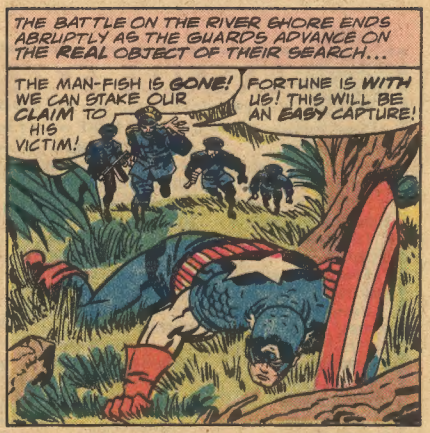
THE THING FROM THE RIVER GIVES NO PAUSE FOR RECOVERY! ITS BODY COURSES WITH A PRIMITIVE FURY WHICH BLAZES UNTIL THE VICTIM EXPIRES!!!
RRROAR!
KRAK!
CAP STRUGGLES LIKE A MADMAN TO FREE HIMSELF! HE CATCHES HORRIFYING GLIMPSES OF HIS ATTACKER AND FORCES HIS STRENGTH TO ITS LIMITS!
GOOD GOD!! W-WHAT IS IT!? WHAT IS IT!?
A THOUSAND DEATH ENCOUNTERS HAVE NOT PREPARED CAP FOR THIS. HIS KNEES BUCKLE UNDER THE CRUSHING WEIGHT OF THE CREATURE!! HE IS THROWN TO THE JUNGLE FLOOR!!
AARRRR!
SUDDENLY, VOICES SOUND IN THE NEARBY BRUSH!! UNIFORMED GUARDS BURST INTO VIEW AND OPEN FIRE!!
IT'S THE MAN-FISH! HE'S GOT OUR QUARRY!
HE WON'T HAVE HIM FOR LONG!
POW!
A DEADLY FUSILADE IS HURLED AT THE STARTLED MONSTER! HE HALTS HIS SAVAGE WORK TO ROAR AT THE INTRUDERS!
BULLETS CAN'T PENETRATE THAT ARMORED SKIN, BUT THE SOUND OF GUNFIRE DISTURBS HIM!!
POW! POW!
SCREEEE


UNABLE TO COPE WITH THE STORM OF BULLETS, THE MONSTER EMITS A FINAL ROAR AND RETURNS TO THE DARK DEPTHS WHICH CLOSE ABOVE HIM AND SHIELD HIM FROM THE EXPLOSIVE CHAOS!!


THE BATTLE ON THE RIVER SHORE ENDS ABRUPTLY AS THE GUARDS ADVANCE ON THE REAL OBJECT OF THEIR SEARCH...
THE MAN-FISH IS GONE! WE CAN STAKE OUR CLAIM TO HIS VICTIM!
FORTUNE IS WITH US! THIS WILL BE AN EASY CAPTURE!

HA HA HA! SO THE TIGER HAS BEEN WEAKENED BY THE STRUGGLE!! SEIZE HIM!
HE OFFERS NO RESISTANCE...
ONE RARELY DOES AFTER MEETING THE MAN-FISH!

CAP IS LIFTED TO HIS FEET AND PROPPED AGAINST A TREE...
SPEAK, TIGER! HAVE YOU NO WORD OF THANKS FOR YOUR RESCUERS!?
YEAH! BLOW IT OUT YOUR MOUSTACHE!
THOSE ARE HARDLY WORDS OF GRATITUDE!

MANY PRISON ESCAPEES HAVE COME THIS WAY-- AND PERISHED!! YOU ARE THE FIRST TO KEEP YOUR SKIN INTACT!!!
NOW YOU KNOW WHY THIS INVITING BODY OF WATER IS CALLED THE "RIVER OF DEATH"! THE MAN-FISH GUARDS IT WELL!
ESCAPE IS IMPOSSIBLE, TIGER. WE'RE TAKING YOU TO OUR COMMANDANTE... HE WILL TREAT YOU AS DID THE MAN-FISH... BUT YOUR DEATH WILL BE-- SLOWER!

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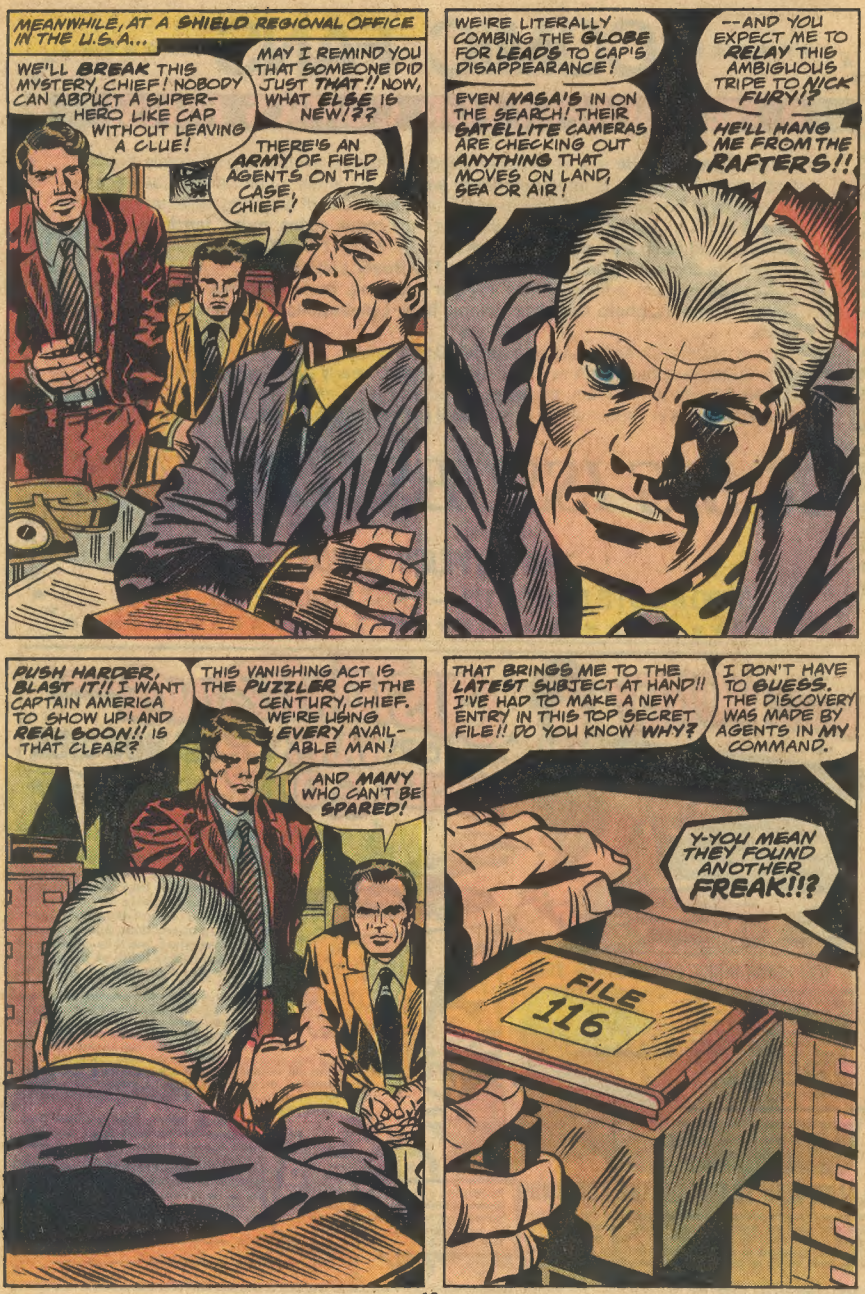
MEANWHILE, AT A SHIELD REGIONAL OFFICE IN THE U.S.A...
WE'LL BREAK THIS MYSTERY, CHIEF! NOBODY CAN ABDUCT A SUPER-HERO LIKE CAP WITHOUT LEAVING A CLUE!
MAY I REMIND YOU THAT SOMEONE DID JUST THAT!! NOW, WHAT ELSE IS NEW!??
THERE'S AN ARMY OF FIELD AGENTS ON THE CASE, CHIEF!
WE'RE LITERALLY COMBING THE GLOBE FOR LEADS TO CAP'S DISAPPEARANCE!
EVEN NASA'S IN ON THE SEARCH! THEIR SATELLITE CAMERAS ARE CHECKING OUT ANYTHING THAT MOVES ON LAND, SEA OR AIR!
--AND YOU EXPECT ME TO RELAY THIS AMBIGUOUS TRIPE TO NICK FURY!?
HE'LL HANG ME FROM THE RAFTERS!!
PUSH HARDER, BLAST IT!! I WANT CAPTAIN AMERICA TO SHOW UP! AND REAL SOON!! IS THAT CLEAR?
THIS VANISHING ACT IS THE PUZZLER OF THE CENTURY, CHIEF. WE'RE USING EVERY AVAILABLE MAN!
AND MANY WHO CAN'T BE SPARED!
THAT BRINGS ME TO THE LATEST SUBJECT AT HAND!! I'VE HAD TO MAKE A NEW ENTRY IN THIS TOP SECRET FILE!! DO YOU KNOW WHY?
I DON'T HAVE TO GUESS. THE DISCOVERY WAS MADE BY AGENTS IN MY COMMAND.
Y-YOU MEAN THEY FOUND ANOTHER FREAK!!?
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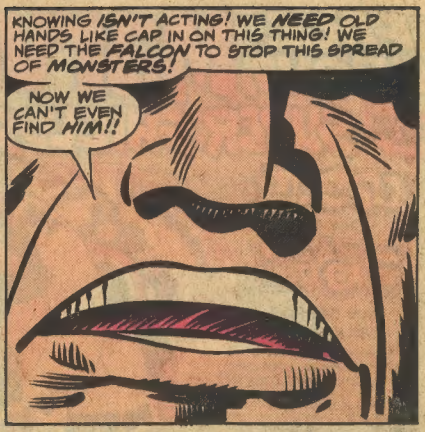
KNOWING ISN'T ACTING! WE NEED OLD HANDS LIKE CAP IN ON THIS THING! WE NEED THE FALCON TO STOP THIS SPREAD OF MONSTERS!
NOW WE CAN'T EVEN FIND HIM!!

AT THAT MOMENT...
THAT'S JUST FINE, SHIELD MAN! THAT LAST REMARK SURE MAKES MY DAY!!
LEILA! FOR HEAVEN'S SAKE, GIRL! YOU KNOW BETTER THAN TO BREAK IN LIKE THIS!!

AFTER ALL, THIS IS A SHIELD OFFICE. WE DISCUSS PROBLEMS HERE OF INTERNATIONAL IMPORTANCE. YOU'VE GOT TO USE DISCRETION AND--!
YOU ARE DISCUSSING MY PROBLEM, MISTER!! TWO MISSING SUPERHEROES!

I'M CERTAIN THAT THE FALCON'S OKAY. HE'S OUT WITH THE REST OF US--LOOKING FOR CAP!
YEAH! LOOKING AND PERHAPS FINDING THE SAME HOLE THAT SWALLOWED HIS BEST FRIEND!

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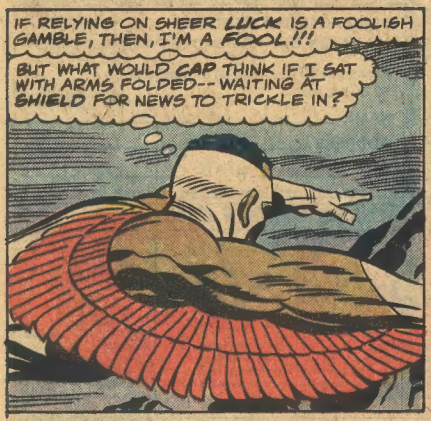
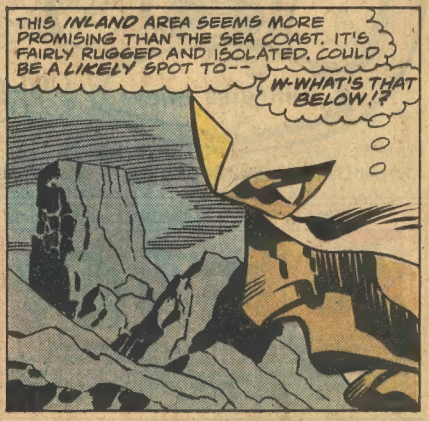
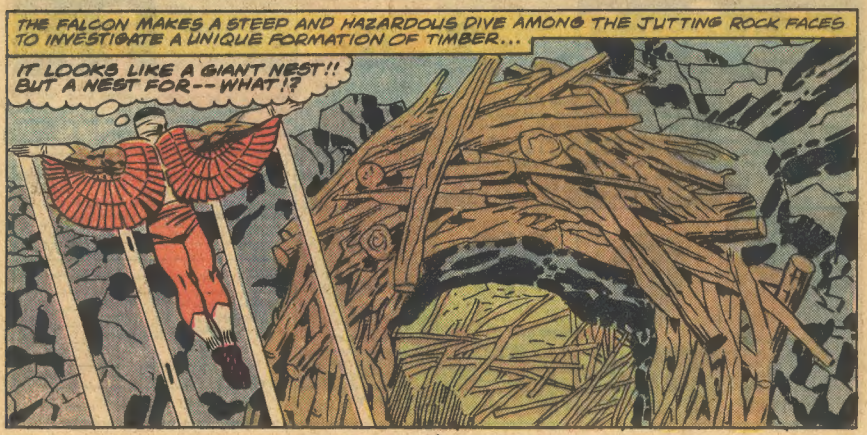
MY THOUGHTS HAVE BEEN A SERIES OF NIGHTMARES SINCE THIS THING BEGAN!! I SEE MONSTERS EVERYWHERE-- REACHING HUNGRILY FOR SAM--AND CAP!!
HEAR THAT? DO YOU THINK SHE KNOWS--?
NO! THE GIRL IS MERELY STRUNG OUT!

MONSTERS-- FEARSOME VISIONS IN HEARTS FILLED WITH UNCERTAINTY AND DOUBT. SOMEWHERE, IN A VAST SKY ABOVE MASSED MOUNTAIN PEAKS, THE FALCON CONTINUES HIS SEARCH...
I REALIZE THAT I MAY BE A CONTINENT OFF MY MARK, BUT THE EFFORT TO FIND CAP MUST BE MADE!!

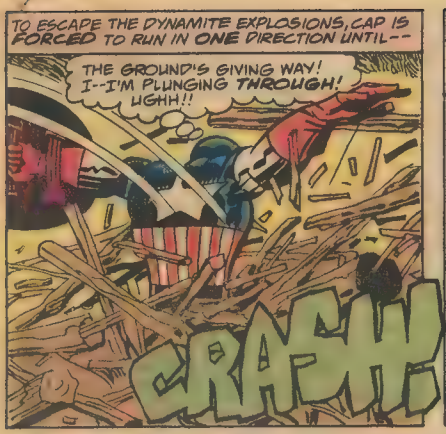

IF RELYING ON SHEER LUCK IS A FOOLISH GAMBLE, THEN, I'M A FOOL!!!
BUT WHAT WOULD CAP THINK IF I SAT WITH ARMS FOLDED-- WAITING AT SHIELD FOR NEWS TO TRICKLE IN?

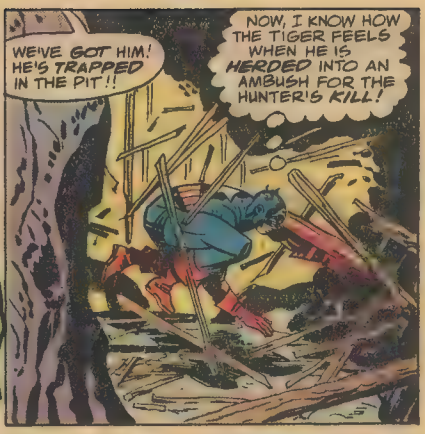

THIS INLAND AREA SEEMS MORE PROMISING THAN THE SEA COAST. IT'S FAIRLY RUGGED AND ISOLATED. COULD BE A LIKELY SPOT TO--
W-WHAT'S THAT BELOW!?


THE FALCON MAKES A STEEP AND HAZARDOUS DIVE AMONG THE JUTTING ROCK FACES TO INVESTIGATE A UNIQUE FORMATION OF TIMBER...
IT LOOKS LIKE A GIANT NEST!! BUT A NEST FOR-- WHAT!?

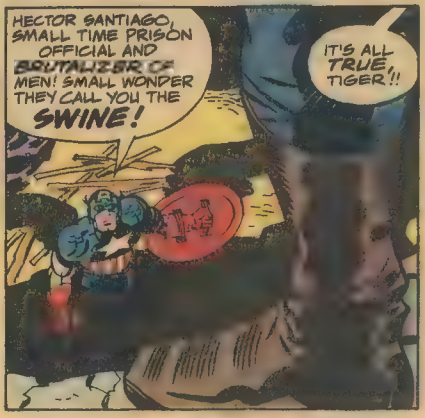
ALTHOUGH PARTED BY IMMENSE DISTANCES, THE FALCON AND CAP ARE ABOUT TO SHARE A SINGULARLY FRIGHTENING EXPERIENCE...
I'VE HAD MY FILL OF YOUR SMALL TALK!!
UGH!
WHAAM!!
POK!
STOP HIM, YOU IDIOTS!
CAP HAS RECOVERED FROM HIS TRYING ORDEAL WITH THE MAN-FISH!! AMONG HUMAN ENEMIES, HE IS ONCE MORE THE CONQUEROR OF PRESSING ODDS...
SORRY TO SPOIL YOUR FUN, CLOWN!
MASKED DEMON! YOU'VE SHATTERED MY WEAPON!!
SMASH!
HIS CAPTORS ARE CONFOUNDED BY CAP'S ABILITY TO AVOID CONTAINMENT!! ONE BY ONE, THEY FALL VICTIM TO HIS MERCURIAL FORM OF COMBAT!!!
THE FIEND IS ESCAPING!! AAAA--!!
YOU'RE STANDING IN AN ACCIDENT ZONE, FELLA!
WOK!
KRAK!

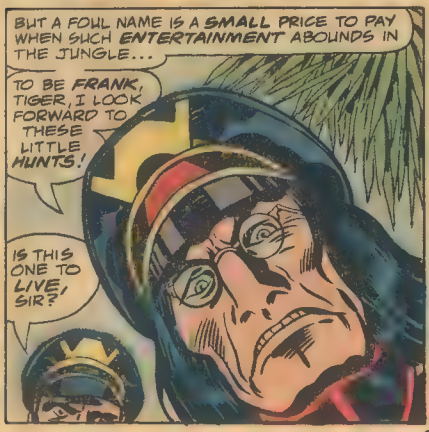
NEITHER SHOUT NOR SHOT CAN HALT THE FLASHING PHANTOM AS HE RACES FOR FREEDOM!! CAP RAPIDLY OUTDISTANCES HIS PURSUERS!!!
WE CAN'T HIT HIM! HE'S AN IMPOSSIBLE TARGET!
THIS TAKES YEARS OF EXPERIENCE, MEN! IN A MESS OF TIGHT SPOTS!
POW! POW! POW!
SUDDENLY, A MENACING CYLINDRICAL OBJECT IS HURLED DIRECTLY IN HIS PATH!!!
WHA--!? DYNAMITE!!
THEN--!
BLAAMM!
CAP NARROWLY ESCAPES THE BLAST, WHEN ANOTHER ERUPTS AT HIS SIDE!
WHAAM!!
PLACE THE EXPLOSIONS AS DIRECTED! DRIVE HIM TOWARD THE PIT!!
IZOW!! ZOW!


TO ESCAPE THE DYNAMITE EXPLOSIONS, CAP IS FORCED TO RUN IN ONE DIRECTION UNTIL--
THE GROUND'S GIVING WAY! I--I'M PLUNGING THROUGH! UGHH!!
CRASH!!



THERE IS A LONG MOMENT OF SILENCE. THEN, A MAN'S SHADOW IS CAST ACROSS THE WALL OF THE PIT...
YOU TOOK YOUR TIME GETTING HERE, COMMANDANTE! GUESS YOU FEEL SAFE WITH ALL THAT DYNAMITE ON YOUR SIDE!


HECTOR SANTIAGO, SMALL TIME PRISON OFFICIAL AND BRUTALIZER OF MEN! SMALL WONDER THEY CALL YOU THE SWINE!
IT'S ALL TRUE, TIGER!!


BUT A FOUL NAME IS A SMALL PRICE TO PAY WHEN SUCH ENTERTAINMENT ABOUNDS IN THE JUNGLE...
TO BE FRANK, TIGER, I LOOK FORWARD TO THESE LITTLE HUNTS!
IS THIS ONE TO LIVE, SIR?

YES, HE SHALL LIVE! BUT THIS DAY SHALL ALWAYS BURN IN HIS MEMORY. HAND ME THE FLAME-THROWER!
HECTOR! NO! NO!!
IS IT NOT WISER TO KILL THIS TIGER NOW, SIR?

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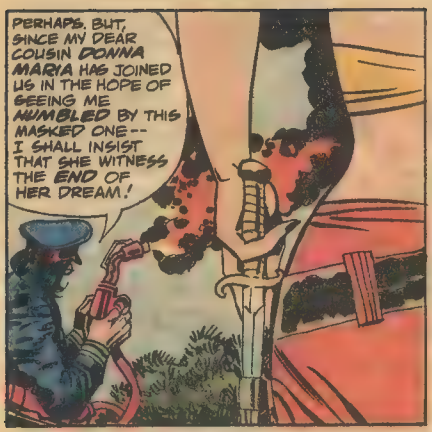

PERHAPS, BUT, SINCE MY DEAR COUSIN DONNA MARIA HAS JOINED US IN THE HOPE OF SEEING ME HUMBLED BY THIS MASKED ONE-- I SHALL INSIST THAT SHE WITNESS THE END OF HER DREAM!

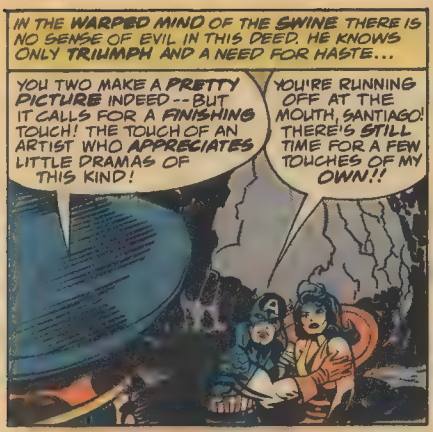
YOU SADISTIC SWINE! DROP THAT FLAME-THROWER!
WHA--!!
THAT DISPLAY OF TEMPER SHALL COST YOU DEARLY, COUSIN!!

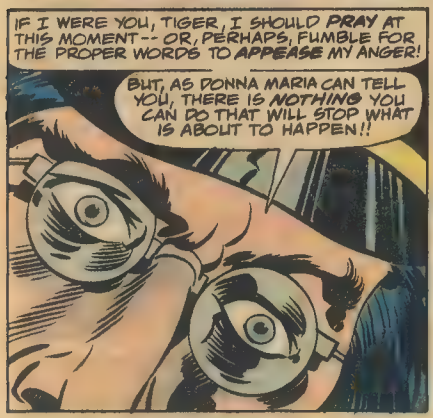
THIS IS THE LAST TIME THAT YOU AND I SHALL DISPUTE MY WAYS!! I'M GOING TO RID MYSELF OF YOUR CLACKING TONGUE FOREVER!!
DO YOUR WORST, COUSIN!! BUT DON'T EXPECT ME TO BEG FOR MERCY!!

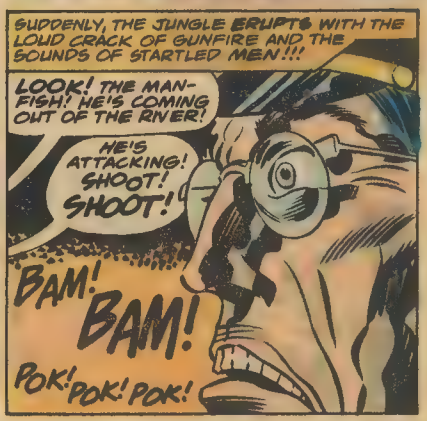
HOW BRAVE YOU ARE, DONNA MARIA! WHY, YOU'RE AS BRAVE AS THIS TIGER, YOU SO ADMIRE!!
IT WOULD BE ONLY FITTING THAT YOU SHARE THE SAME FATE! DON'T YOU AGREE, MY DEAR!?

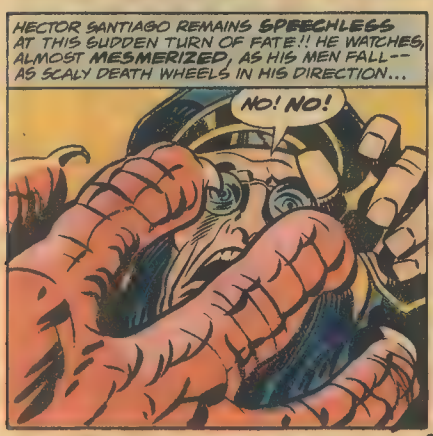
OF COURSE YOU DO!!
JOIN HIM, THEN!!

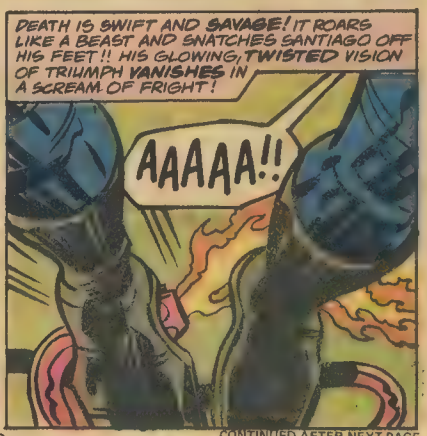
HAHAHA!!! THIS FINAL SCENE IS PERFECT! PERFECT!! HAHAHA!!
AS THE GIRL PLUMMETS INTO THE PIT, CAP MOVES TO BREAK HER FALL...
EASY, MISS! I'VE GOT YOU!


IN THE WARPED MIND OF THE SWINE THERE IS NO SENSE OF EVIL IN THIS DEED. HE KNOWS ONLY TRIUMPH AND A NEED FOR HASTE...
YOU TWO MAKE A PRETTY PICTURE INDEED--BUT IT CALLS FOR A FINISHING TOUCH! THE TOUCH OF AN ARTIST WHO APPRECIATES LITTLE DRAMAS OF THIS KIND!
YOU'RE RUNNING OFF AT THE MOUTH, SANTIAGO! THERE'S STILL TIME FOR A FEW TOUCHES OF MY OWN!!


IF I WERE YOU, TIGER, I SHOULD PRAY AT THIS MOMENT--OR, PERHAPS, FUMBLE FOR THE PROPER WORDS TO APPEASE MY ANGER!
BUT, AS DONNA MARIA CAN TELL YOU, THERE IS NOTHING YOU CAN DO THAT WILL STOP WHAT IS ABOUT TO HAPPEN!!


SUDDENLY, THE JUNGLE ERUPTS WITH THE LOUD CRACK OF GUNFIRE AND THE SOUNDS OF STARTLED MEN!!!
LOOK! THE MAN-FISH! HE'S COMING OUT OF THE RIVER!
HE'S ATTACKING! SHOOT! SHOOT!
BAM! BAM!
POK! POK! POK!


HECTOR SANTIAGO REMAINS SPEECHLESS AT THIS SUDDEN TURN OF FATE!! HE WATCHES, ALMOST MESMERIZED, AS HIS MEN FALL--AS SCALY DEATH WHEELS IN HIS DIRECTION...
NO! NO!


DEATH IS SWIFT AND SAVAGE! IT ROARS LIKE A BEAST AND SNATCHES SANTIAGO OFF HIS FEET!! HIS GLOWING, TWISTED VISION OF TRIUMPH VANISHES IN A SCREAM OF FRIGHT!
AAAAA!!

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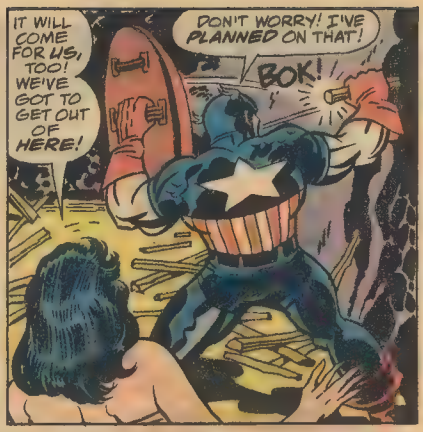
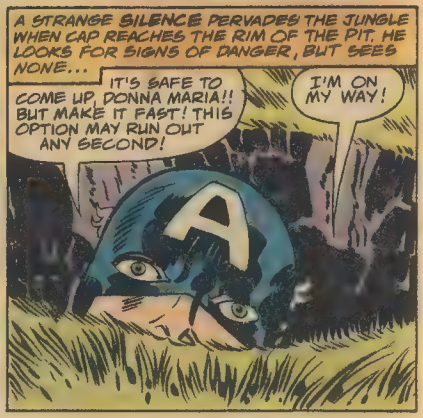
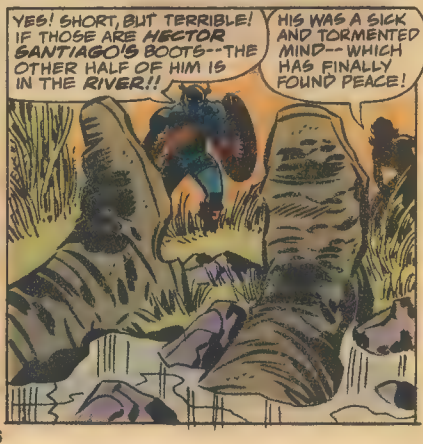
MEANWHILE, IN THE PIT BELOW...
HELP! HELP! YAAAAAA!!
RRRRRR!
IT SEEMS LIKE THE SWINE'S RUN INTO SOMETHING NASTIER THAN HIMSELF!!
IT'S THE MAN-FISH!

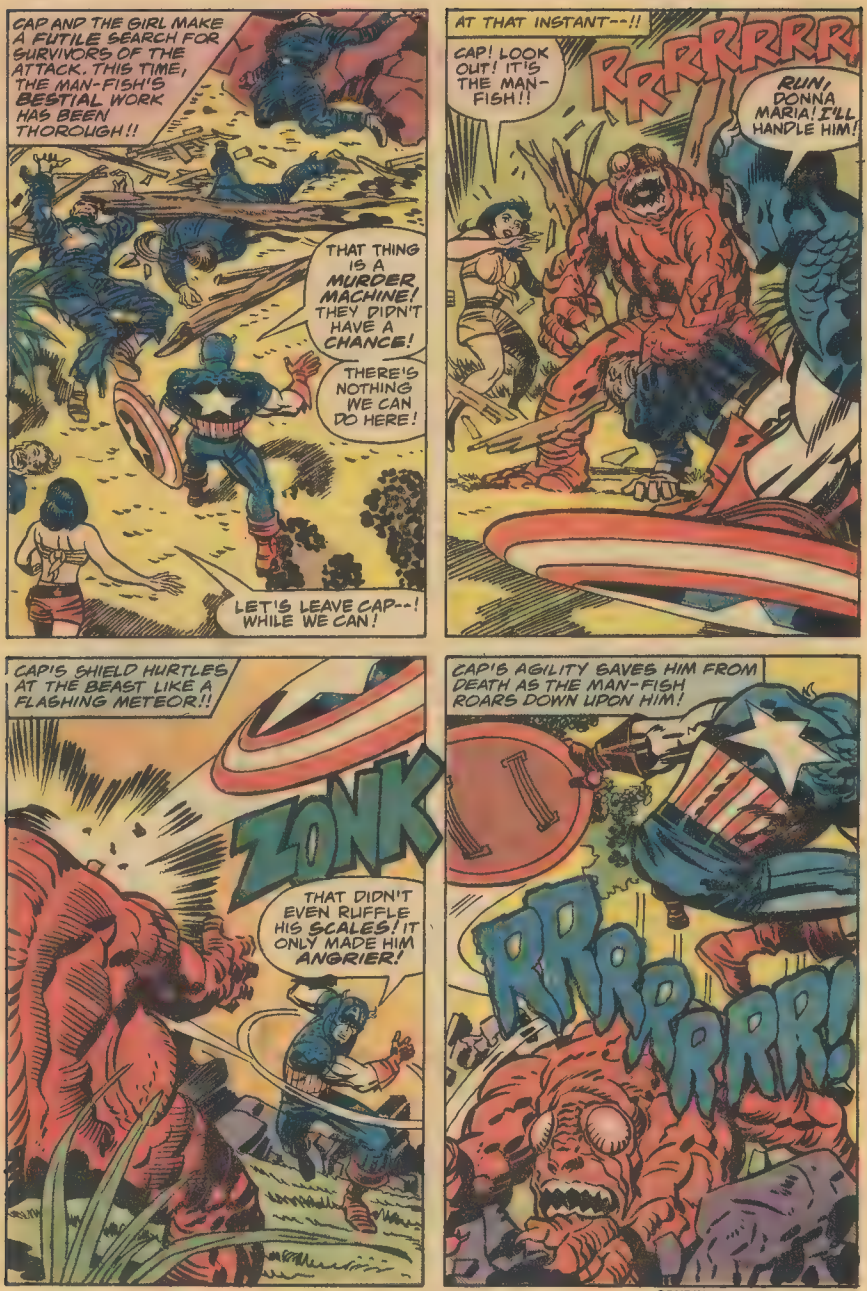

IT WILL COME FOR US, TOO! WE'VE GOT TO GET OUT OF HERE!
DON'T WORRY! I'VE PLANNED ON THAT!
BOK!

SO YOU WERE HAMMERING PEGS INTO THE WALL ALL THIS TIME!
MY FRIENDS CALL ME CAP, MISS. I WON'T FORGET THAT YOU TRIED TO SAVE MY LIFE...
YOU ARE A CLEVER ONE, TIGER!!


A STRANGE SILENCE PERVADES THE JUNGLE WHEN CAP REACHES THE RIM OF THE PIT. HE LOOKS FOR SIGNS OF DANGER, BUT SEES NONE...
IT'S SAFE TO COME UP, DONNA MARIA!! BUT MAKE IT FAST! THIS OPTION MAY RUN OUT ANY SECOND!
I'M ON MY WAY!

MAKE AS LITTLE NOISE AS POSSIBLE. IF THAT MAN-FISH IS STILL IN THE VICINITY, HE'LL BE LISTENING!!
T-THIS PLACE--! IT'S A SHAMBLES! THERE'S BEEN A TERRIBLE STRUGGLE.


YES! SHORT, BUT TERRIBLE! IF THOSE ARE HECTOR SANTIAGO'S BOOTS--THE OTHER HALF OF HIM IS IN THE RIVER!!
HIS WAS A SICK AND TORMENTED MIND--WHICH HAS FINALLY FOUND PEACE!


CAP AND THE GIRL MAKE A FUTILE SEARCH FOR SURVIVORS OF THE ATTACK. THIS TIME, THE MAN-FISH'S BESTIAL WORK HAS BEEN THOROUGH!!
THAT THING IS A MURDER MACHINE! THEY DIDN'T HAVE A CHANCE!
THERE'S NOTHING WE CAN DO HERE!
LET'S LEAVE CAP--! WHILE WE CAN!
AT THAT INSTANT--!!
CAP! LOOK OUT! IT'S THE MAN-FISH!!
RRRRRRR
RUN, DONNA MARIA! I'LL HANDLE HIM!
CAP'S SHIELD HURTLES AT THE BEAST LIKE A FLASHING METEOR!!
ZONK
THAT DIDN'T EVEN RUFFLE HIS SCALES! IT ONLY MADE HIM ANGRIER!
CAP'S AGILITY SAVES HIM FROM DEATH AS THE MAN-FISH ROARS DOWN UPON HIM!
RRRRRRR!

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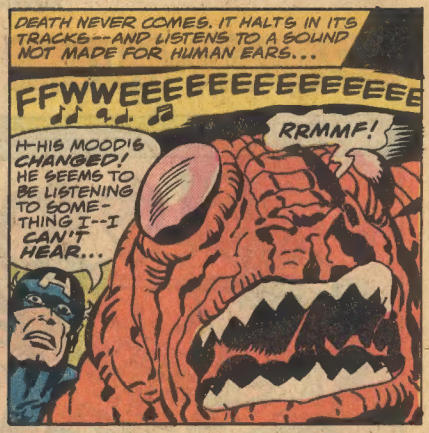
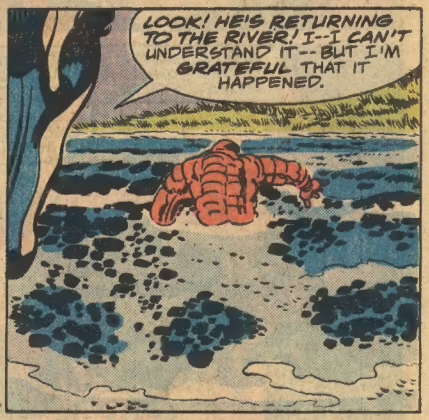
SUDDENLY, DONNA MARIA JOINS THE GRISLY GAME. SOMEHOW, SHE MUST DO SOMETHING TO HELP THIS BRAVE COMPANION!
DON'T! STAY OUT OF THIS! DO WHAT I TELL YOU!!
AAAARRR
NO! WE ESCAPE OR DIE-- TOGETHER!


DEATH NEVER COMES. IT HALTS IN ITS TRACKS--AND LISTENS TO A SOUND NOT MADE FOR HUMAN EARS...
FFWWEEEEEEEEEEEEEE
H-HIS MOOD IS CHANGED! HE SEEMS TO BE LISTENING TO SOMETHING I--I CAN'T HEAR...
RRMMF!

HE'S IGNORING US! PERHAPS THERE IS A CHANCE!
LET'S HOPE SO! THIS MAY BE A LUCKY BREAK!


LOOK! HE'S RETURNING TO THE RIVER! I--I CAN'T UNDERSTAND IT-- BUT I'M GRATEFUL THAT IT HAPPENED.

THERE'S SOMETHING FAMILIAR IN ALL OF THIS. YES, HE BEHAVES LIKE A GUARD DOG, WHO OBEYS AN ULTRA-SONIC WHISTLE!
SAY! YOU MAY HAVE A POINT, THERE.

IF I DO MAKE A POINT--THEN THAT THING HAS A MASTER!! SOMEONE WHO HAS TRAINED HIM TO KILL!!
"SURVIVE" IS THE CORRECT WORD MY DEAR.
WHA--!?

CAP AND THE GIRL TURN TO FACE THE WIERDEST SIGHT YET SPAWNED BY THE JUNGLE...
WHO--OR WHAT--ARE YOU!!??
AS YOU TWO SO CLEVERLY SURMISED, I AM THE MASTER! THE MASTER OF ALL I CREATE!
WHEN I CALL, MY SUBJECTS MUST RESPOND!
PERHAPS WHEN WE KNOW EACH OTHER BETTER, YOU TOO SHALL ANSWER--TO THIS!

YESTERDAY'S FANTASY! TODAY'S TRUTH! TOMORROW'S TERROR?

NEXT: ARNIM ZOLA!

BIO-FANATIC!

LET'S RAP WITH CAP

SEND YOUR LETTERS TO: THE MARVEL COMICS GROUP 575 MADISON AV. NEW YORK, NY 10022

Dear Jack,

CAPTAIN AMERICA #204 was the best issue you've written so far. It had everything. Obviously, the readers who wrote to you about your lack of sub-plots (most notably Sharon Carter and Cap's life) have won out. And am I glad! This issue's discussion between Sharon and Cap hit their problems head on. Both sides were well written and to the point. Also, Cap's brooding about it later was well handled. It shows how set in his ways Cap is: Sharon will have to come around to *his* way of thinking. Can't he concede a little? Their relationship, with this installment, has reached a peak. Either they both give in a little, or they may as well call it quits.

I won't spend too much time talking about the action in this issue, because that's what you do the best. It seems, after all, that the Night-People did serve a purpose: they got Cap into the Shield Psychiatric Section; and because of the treatments they gave to the Falcon, he may come out of his ordeal a new man. The art, as usual, was terrific and the whole issue moved briskly.

There's one last point I'd like to make: Is Agron a symbol of Captain America's present state? A non-human, super-strong fighting machine? Sharon says that Cap isn't human.... ....and maybe, to a certain extent, he isn't.

It seems that what Cap needs now is a little humanizing. Give him a life, a love (it doesn't have to be Sharon), some friends (do you realize that outside of Sharon, the Falcon, and Nick Fury, Cap doesn't really have any friends?), and show more of Steve Rogers. Jack, as of this issue you're on the right track. I have faith in you, and I know you'll be able to do it. We've seen Captain America the hero; let's see Captain America the man.

Henry Lipput
236 Main Street
South River, NJ 08882

Dear Jack,

If CAPTAIN AMERICA #204 is any indication, you need to brush up on your Marvel Universe, Jack. To wit:

After Agron breaks free of his cell, SHIELD "security squads" come flooding down the corridor to subdue the living-deadman. But since when do SHIELD agents wear outfits that are very, very much like standard police uniforms?

Adding insult to injury, this same "security squad" faces Agron with nothing more than ordinary, bullet-firing rifles. SHIELD has long been noted for its use of imaginative, super-scientific weaponry. Why couldn't the squad employ those big blasters Fury always used to carry? (I knew SHIELD's budget had been cut—but that's ridiculous!)

On page three, panels 1 and 2, you have Cap and Doc Hartman discussing Agron. Cap says, "Come on, Doc! You can't be hinting at demon possession! It's just too far out, Doc!"

Tut, tut, Jack! You should know that Cap was an Invader during World War II and is currently an Avenger. While in Great Britain in 1942, Cap and the Invaders battled a vampire known as Baron Blood. More recently, in AVENGERS, Cap and company took on Damballa and a voodoo cult led by Black Talon, and saw Wonder Man reanimated as a zuvembie. In that same issue, Cap said, "When you've seen the sights I've seen, nothing is strange anymore."

Now, why would Cap say he is no longer surprised by super-natural events in one place, but refuse to believe in a "living cadaver" in another? I realize you want a lot of creative leeway with the characters you handle, Jack, but you have to remember that CAP is part of the mainstream Marvel Universe...part of a cohesive whole. These anomalies can be dangerous to that cohesiveness—at the very least, they're annoying.

There's nothing wrong with an occasional science-fiction tale as a change of pace, but Cap and Falc are super-heroes, and a steady diet of SF in a super-hero title can get pretty tiresome. (And it's not that I don't like SF. I have several hundred titles in my own library.) I just hope you plan to reinstate super-villains in this strip soon. How about a return by Batroc or the Grey Gargoyle?

On the whole, I haven't been too pleased with your scripting on this book. I hope things will improve as time goes on.

Bruce Canwell
Meadows Road, RFD #2
Bowdoin, ME 04008

Your concern for continuity is appreciated, Bruce—since it is also shared by most everyone in the ever-lovin' Marvel Bullpen. However, on occasion it's possible to carry even that concern too far; for instance, SHIELD has many division and sub-divisions, and there is no standard dress code across-the-board for every squad and platoon and operative. Therefore, we think it not unlikely that certain segments of SHIELD's forces might wear clothing somewhat nearer the norm, and carry weapons not altogether out of the ordinary.

As for the discrepancies in Cap's behavior occasionally from title to title, you have a valid point. We're always striving to maintain consistency in a constantly burgeoning Marvel Universe, and...sometimes...we mess up. On the other hand, let's not forget that none of us is entirely consistent within the framework of our own lives and statements from week to week and year to year—so there is a certain amount of leeway. Also, it's always understood that we're witnessing the exploits of our characters as filtered through the minds of our writers and artists, who have some liberty in precisely how they choose to detail events.

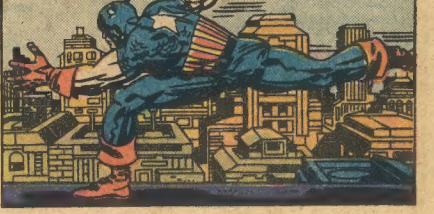
Attention, Stan Lee--

Since Jack started writing for Marvel again, the plotlines of CAPTAIN AMERICA (and of ETERNALS) have had little if anything to do with the rest of the Marvel Universe. I think somebody should a) inform Jack of this matter, b) ask him to rectify the situation, and c) have him pick up the excellent plot threads left by Marv Wolfman. I seem to recall something about Sam Wilson having two personalities. Jack hardly touched upon it. There was also something in the works about Cap's shield—and whatever happened to Morgan, the Harlem crimelord?

Robert Sodaro
141 Carroll Road
Fairfield, CT 06430

As you know from our answer to Bruce Canwell's criticisms elsewhere on this page, Bob, we're all in here tryin' when it comes to the far-famed Marvel continuity. But just as events do not always proceed with linear smoothness and pattern in everyday life, neither must they necessarily do so on the printed page. After all, we're the guys who've become known for resurrecting unresolved plot threads from the 1940s and '50s, thirty years after the fact! So rest assured that if certain sub-plots do not resurface today, they will...eventually.

That's all for this month. Keep cool!



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